

Message Text

SECRET

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DRAFTED BY: NEA:TTOMPKINS:KHA

APPROVED BY: NEA-TAIN TOMPKINS

S/S-MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN FLASH

S E C R E T STATE 172278

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

EYES ONLY AMBASSADOR HELMS

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 172278 ACTION AMMAN 22 JULY.

QUOTE

S E C R E T STATE 172278

EXDIS (HANDLE AS NODIS)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, JO, US

SUBJECT: AIR DEFENSE EQUIPMENT FOR JORDAN

FOR CHARGE FROM THE SECRETARY

1. YOU SHOULD SEEK AN IMMEDIATE APPOINTMENT WITH PRIME
MINISTER RIFAI AND CONVEY TO HIM THE ATTACHED MESSAGE
FROM THE SECRETARY TO KING HUSSEIN.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

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YOUR MAJESTY:

I WANT TO REPORT TO YOU ON WHERE WE NOW STAND WITH THE CONGRESS ON THE QUESTION OF AIR DEFENSE EQUIPMENT FOR JORDAN. IN ADDITION, I WANT TO SEEK YOUR OBSERVATIONS AND GUIDANCE ON HOW WE MIGHT BEST PROCEED IN THIS MATTER.

AFTER A WEEK OF CLOSE CONSULTATIONS AND HEARINGS, PARTICULARLY WITH THE SENATE WHERE WE HAVE JUDGED OUR MAIN STRENGTH RESTS, THE SITUATION WHICH WE NOW FACE IS AS FOLLOWS. THERE IS GREAT ADMIRATION FOR JORDAN AND YOUR MAJESTY, AND THIS CONTINUES TO BE THE BULWARK OF OUR EFFORTS. THERE IS NO OPPOSITION TO SALE OF THE REDEYE AND

VULCAN. THERE IS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT WE SHOULD SELL SOME HAWK MISSILES TO YOU, AND THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM WITH SIX BATTERIES, BUT THERE IS OPPOSITION TO THE 14 BATTERIES WE HAVE AGREED UPON. THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE HAS COME TO US SEEKING A COMPROMISE IN ORDER TO AVOID WHAT WE WOULD ALL CONSIDER TO BE A MOST UNDESIRABLE SITUATION IN WHICH THE ISSUE WAS PUT TO A TEST IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES OF OUR GOVERNMENT. OUR BEST JUDGMENT IS THAT, IF WE DO NOT ATTEMPT IN SOME WAY TO FIND A BASIS FOR ACCOMMODATION WITH THE CONGRESS, THE ENTIRE PACKAGE COULD BE DISAPPROVED.

GIVEN THIS POSITION OF IMPASSE WE HAVE CONSIDERED THREE OPTIONS. THE FIRST WOULD BE TO WITHDRAW THE LETTER OF OFFER PROVIDING FOR THE SALE AS SOME OF OUR CONGRESSIONAL CRITICS HAVE URGED AND RESUBMIT IT WITH THE NUMBER OF HAWK BATTERIES REDUCED TO SIX. WE WOULD THEN PRESUMABLY BE ABLE TO HAVE THE LETTER OF OFFER APPROVED BY THE CONGRESS WITHOUT OBJECTION. I MUST TELL YOU HONESTLY THAT I AM DEEPLY OPPOSED TO THIS OPTION. WE WOULD NOT BE KEEPING FAITH IN OUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR MAJESTY NOR WOULD WE BE PROVIDING OVER TIME AN ADEQUATE AIR DEFENSE TO YOUR COUNTRY. OUR ARAB FRIENDS WOULD HAVE JUSTIFIABLE CAUSE TO WONDER AT OUR FIRMNESS AND CONSTANCY TOWARD OUR COMMITMENTS.

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A SECOND OPTION WOULD BE TO WITHDRAW THE LETTER OF OFFER AND RESUBMIT IT AT SOME LATER TIME WHEN OUR REASSESSMENT HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND WHEN WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO PROVIDE FOR THE WEAPONS NEEDS, INCLUDING SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT, OF ALL THE STATES IN THE AREA. THE FACT THAT WE ARE PROCEEDING SEPARATELY WITH JORDAN HAS CAUSED SOME CONCERN WITH CONGRESS. THIS OPTION WOULD NOT HELP US

SIGNIFICANTLY, HOWEVER, WITH THOSE WHO ARE PRESSURING FOR A SMALLER NUMBER OF HAWK MISSILES FOR JORDAN, AND I PERSONALLY DOUBT YOUR MAJESTY WOULD WANT US TO FOLLOW THIS COURSE.

THE FINAL OPTION WHICH WE HAVE CONSIDERED, WOULD BE FOR USTO AMEND THE LETTER OF OFFER. THE FULL SALE WOULD GO AHEAD. DELIVERY OF THE FIRST SIX BATTERIES OF HAWKS WOULD BE UNINTERRUPTED. WE WOULD INCLUDE LANGUAGE IN THE LETTER OF OFFER WHICH WOULD SAY THAT AFTER THE SIXTH DELIVERY AND BEFORE THE SEVENTH BATTERY IS DELIVERED, CONGRESS WOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY BY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO DISAPPROVE FURTHER DELIVERIES. THE FOLLOWING

IS THE EXACT LANGUAGE WE HAVE IN MIND: "FOLLOWING THE SHIPMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES OF THE SIXTH BATTERY OF HAWK MISSILES, FURTHER DELIVERIES WILL PROCEED UNLESS DISAPPROVED BY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES PRIOR TO SHIPMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES OF THE SEVENTH BATTERY." YOU MAY BE ASSURED THAT YOU HAVE AND WILL HAVE THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AT THE TIME THERE IS A CONSIDERATION OF FURTHER DELIVERIES UNDER THIS TYPE OF ARRANGEMENT. THIS OPTION WOULD ALSO HAVE THE ADVANTAGE THAT THE CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF THE DELIVERIES AFTER THE SIX BATTERIES WOULD COME AT A MUCH LATER DATE WHEN THE SITUATION WOULD BE LESS TENSE THAT IT IS TODAY AND WHEN THERE WOULD BE LESS CHANCE OF A NEGATIVE VOTE BY CONGRESS THAN WE JUDGE TO BE THE SITUATION AT THE PRESENT TIME.

YOUR MAJESTY SHOULD KNOW THAT WE ARE FULLY COMMITTED TO PROVIDING THESE SYSTEMS FOR YOU. WE ARE PREPARED TO FOLLOW EITHER OPTION TWO OR OPTION THREE, WHICHEVER YOUR SECRET

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MAJESTY DECIDES. MY PERSONAL PREFERENCE WOULD BE TO GO NOW FOR THE ENTIRE PACKAGE WE HAVE AGREED TO WITH YOU, FOLLOWING THE PROCEDURE OUTLINED UNDER OPTION THREE.

IF YOUR MAJESTY SHOULD HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR FURTHER SUGGESTIONS OR IDEAS WE WOULD BE MOST PLEASED TO CONSIDER THEM. IN VIEW OF THE RELATIVELY LIMITED AMOUNT OF TIME AVAILABLE TO US ON THIS QUESTION, I URGE THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE RESPONSE TO THIS MESSAGE. I RECOGNIZE THAT THIS IS A DIFFICULT DECISION AND I DO NOT WANT TO PRASS YOUR MAJESTY TO MAKE IT HASTILY, BUT IT WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IN OUR DEALINGS WITH THE CONGRESS IF WE COULD HAVE YOUR VIEWS FOR OUR GUIDANCE BY WEDNESDAY MORNING, WASHINGTON TIME. SINCERELY, HENRY A. KISSINGER.

END MESSAGE. KISSINGER UNQUOTE

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